

Support HB 5785 An Act Concerning Home Improvement Contractors

Dear Rep. Baram, Senator Leone and members of the General Law Committee.

My name is Lucas Papageorge Jr. I live in Fairfield, CT and have been a Professional Home Improvement Contractor for more than 15 years.

I am coming before you today in support of HB 5785. This bill is long overdue and greatly needed. General Contractors (carpenters) are the only trade in the state of Connecticut that is not licensed. The current registration process is nothing more than writing a check. This gives the public a false sense of security that the state has done its due diligence in supplying Registrations. This bill will provide a minimum level of entry to receive a registration.

Also, the guarantee fund is grossly underfunded, by doubling the fund pay out it will help to further protect consumers as \$15,000 in this day and age is not nearly enough to help homeowner become whole when damage is done to their properties. Usually the \$15,000 is small consolation to the homeowner after they went through the entire judicial process, paid their legal fees, obtain a guilty verdict, attempted to collect, and be unsuccessful. All of which is required to gain access to the Guarantee Fund.

Under this bill the contractor would be required to have a minimum amount of Liability Insurance. It only makes sense for someone in business doing work on a home to carry liability insurance; a small mistake could cost a fortune far beyond the means of most contractors or homeowners. With no insurance someone is left holding the bag.

Having a mandated test on Home Improvement Act knowledge for all new Home Improvement Contractors is also a great step in the right direction. There are so many easily followed requirements in The Home Improvement Act that will help to protect both contractors and homeowners. It is sad that the vast majority of contractors do not know the requirements. Many of whom don't even know the law or informational booklet exists or what is required of them.

I Not only support this bill but would like to see an additional bill to give knowledge based testing for a true licensed General Contractor, along with continuing education requirements. This would regulate General Contractors in the State of Ct the same as any other trade and many other states. I feel this is of grave importance after seeing and repairing many faulty and dangerous projects done by registered but untested contractors.

I urge you to support this bill and move it to a vote in the House and Senate as the first step in a long overdue adjustment to The Home Improvement Contractor Registrations.

I'll be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Lucas Papageorge Jr.

LCP General Contractors LLC.

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